Relaxation to sportsmen and folk artists in Railways

†*168. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the relaxation being provided to sportsmen and folk artists in employment has been withdrawn;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of persons from arts and sports, so far, absorbed in various departments?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) During the last three years (1999-2000 to 2001 -2002) approximately 40 persons have been appointed against the Cultural Quota and about 1050 against the Sports Quota in various Departments of Indian Railways.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

*169. SHRI R. S. GAVAI:
SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that States are showing lukewarm attitude towards the 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan' Scheme of Government;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have considered the recommendations made by Tapas Majumdar Committee in its report regarding financial assistance needed for education sector;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the reaction of Government thereto; and

(f) the names of the other international participant countries in the said 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan' with details thereof?

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) The Tapas Majumdar Committee recommendations were kept in view while finalising the requirements of funds for the implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), which is the National programme for universalizatioh of elementary education in the country by 2010.

(f) SSA is a nationally evolved and funded programme for universalization of elementary education. However, seeing the robustness of the programme, the European Commission have already committed an amount of 200 million Euros for funding of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) whereas World Bank and British Overseas Development Agency (ODA) are also interested in committing funds for support of the programme.

Development of co-operatives

*170. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government consider that the banking functions are an esential ingredient for the furtherance of the co-operative movement;

(b) if so, its possible impact on the co-operative movement; and

(c) whether wide ranging restrictions imposed on the co-operatives to launch and continue banking functions will affect the co-operatives and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAJNATH SINGH): (a) and (b) Banking is the main economic activity undertaken by the credit co-operatives having membership strength of around 157 million (March, 2001).

(c) There are no restrictive provisions. Certain checks and balances have been built in by the Government and the Reserve Bank of India to regulate the affairs of the co-operative banks with the objective of safeguarding the interests of the members and the depositors.